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MONOLOGUES AND PLAYS

Designed for the Platform Entertainer, the Reader and the Teacher.

By
EDNA SUTTON STARK

Kansas City, Missouri
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Dedicated to my Mother.

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THE FIDDLER

NOTE: *To be effective music must be used with this monologue. The "Irish Washerwoman" is best suited. The calls in the parentheses are half sung and half called in a nasal tone. But the short calls between the dashes are decided calls and long drawn out. Remember to give the imaginary dancers plenty of time to go through the steps.*

CHARACTERS

Country Fiddler, *speaker present.*
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Dancers, *supposed to be present.*
SCENE: *Country dance.* 38

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UNCLE EPHRAIM TALKS TO A WAR HERO

(NOTE: *Walk with one hand on imaginary cane, other hand on back. He is bent and old, but with the heart of a youth. He teases the young soldier good-naturedly, and laughs heartily over his own jokes.*)

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Comedy negro-dialect monologue for a woman.

CHARACTERS

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(NOTE: *Put on all the airs that a cullud lady of distinction would assume.*) 50

SAMMY SEES HIS FIRST CIRCUS

Comedy negro-dialect monologue.

CHARACTERS

Sammy, *litte negro boy, speaker present.*
Mammy, *supposed to be present.* 53

THE SALVATION ARMY LASSIE

CHARACTERS

Jennie, *an adorable Salvation Army lass from overseas, speaker present.*

Mrs. Vantrees, *a lady of affluence, very cold and haughty, supposed to be present.*

SCENE: *Luxurious living room of Mrs. Vantrees' home on Fifth Avenue.*

TIME: *At the close of the Great War.*

Jennie has come with news of Mrs. Vantrees' soldier son.

(NOTE: *Jennie speaks with just a suggestion of Irish accent, not broad, but rather a slight rhythmic tone. She is very sweet and timid, yet full of mischief. This monologue requires lots of action and pantomime. It is very effective in costume.*) 56

CAMMOUFLAGE OF THE HEART

Time, 1918. During the Great War.
Place, New York city.
Time of presentation, fifteen minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Franque Godfrey.....Younger sister of Anna.
Anna Godfrey....Fiancee of Capt. John Willacy.

SCENE: *Private sitting room of the two sisters,* Anna *and* Franque. *Furniture, white wicker with blue cretone draperies.* 61

DIAMOND SEVEN, HEARTS EIGHT

Time, present.

Place, Reception Room of Mrs. Stafford's home.

Time of presentation, twenty-five minutes.

CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

Marie.—A French Maid.
Mrs. Loretta Stafford.—Mother of Tom.
Mrs. Ellen VanVoorees.—Mother of Grace.
Grace VanVoorees.
Nathalia Phillips.—Secretary of Mrs. Stafford's.
Natilla.—Cook of Mrs. Stafford's.

(NOTE: *In this sketch, every character has the opportunity of looking beautiful. Mrs. Stafford and Mrs. VanVoorees must not be dressed to look old. Even Natilla, the cook, must look pretty and cute.*)

INTRODUCTION

A monologue requires the impersonation of one distinct character, therefore, it is a step beyond an ordinary reading as it nearer approaches the drama.

More often without the aid of make up, than with it, the monologist must present to his audience a true picture of the character he is representing. If he is successful then he is worthy of the name of Platform Artist.

His task is more difficult than that of the actor as he is denied the stage properties and supporting cast which help the actor to create the illusion. It is quite permissible to dress in suitable costume and adds much to the effect, but in doing so, never give your own introduction, it must be given by some one else or printed on the program, as it is a breach of art, while in costume, to be other than the character impersonated.

A monologue is a one sided conversation. To be a good conversationalist one must be a good listener. Pauses or listening places test the skill of the entertainer. The pauses must not be mere blanks but in them the performer must show by expression and pantomime that which is being said by the other person.

Never make the mistake of reading the manuscript with the sole intention of memorizing. But instead, study the thought expressed. For the time being obliterate self entirely and be the character striving to feel his emotions and think his thoughts. After thoroughly studying, then voice audibly the thoughts given, and with a few repetitions, Lo! It is memorized. Learn to observe humanity; watch for types; always be on the lookout for **little mannerisms** that may be used advantageously.

In a monologue rarely face the audience or turn to the extreme side, but rather address the supposed speaker present, half way between. This does not mean that the monologist must stand in a fixed position. He is allowed all the freedom of action he chooses to exercise. But the audience must be made to feel that there is another definite person or persons present to whom the monologist is speaking.

The introductions must be given distinctly with strict observance as to the correct pronunciation of every word. Only in dialects is it permissible to mispronounce. Even then, dialect must not be so perfect that the meaning is sacrificed. You can not hold your audience unless they understand you.

Don't depend upon a prompter. A prompter differs from an umbrella in that, if you have your umbrella, it's sure not to rain, whereas, if you have a prompter, you are sure to need prompting. No doubt, you will sometimes forget, but if you know that it's up to you, you will rise to the occasion and extricate your-

self without the audience being any the wiser.

Even, after you have given a selection successfully, over and over again, don't become careless and think there is no room for improvement. Perfection is never attained.

THE SOLDIER OF THE WHITE UNIFORM

CHARACTERS

Frank, *a wounded American soldier, speaker present.*

Jim, *his buddy also wounded, supposed to be present.*

SCENE: *In the open air ward of one of the war hospitals somewhere in France. The boys are seated in wheeled chairs.*

That good old warm sun ain't bad, is it Jim? This is the first time in two months I've had the pleasure, of meetin' old Sol, face to face and I kinder feel like I wouldn't mind bein' sunstruck. But say Jim! you hadn't noticed any complainin' notes issuing from my beak and you know blame well, I'm no Pollyanne either—But as long as they keep that little nurse **inside,** they don't have to put me **outside,** to get the benefit of the sunshine—she's the camouflage sunshine all right, all right. - - -

Which nurse am I talking about?—why, the one with them sparkling black eyes, so bright you could light your cigarette from them. The boys call her Sister Cordelia—Say! but she's pretty, and its no beauty parlor prettiness either. But don't them **made** beauties, with their eye brows all plucked out, give yer a

pain? This here girl has the roses in her cheeks, that don't wipe off.

I know it sounds funny to hear me, what they calls the skirt hater, a ravin' like this. But you see, Jim, its this way, I owe my life to that little girl - - - Yes I guess you're right. I'm not the only one that's in debt to her, for their remainin' years on this old globe. But I'd rather you hadn't mentioned it—I kinda like to think I'm the only one. Course I'm not begrudgin' her any war medals for life savin', and it is up to us fellows to do her shoutin' for her, cause she never does any braggin'. I have nicknamed her The Soldier of the White Uniform.

Jim, if I live to be a thousand, I'll never forget the first time I heard her voice.—You know when they brought me in, they thought they was wastin' the government's time, as they was certain they'd have to turn right around, and take me out again. I couldn't speak nor move, but I could hear all right. And I heard old Doc say—"Here's a lad that's Westward Bound."—"Westward Bound." Well I didn't need any map to tell me where I was headed for, and I tho't to myself, if its the settin' sun for me, I'll go over with a rush, same as we went over the top.

But just then, I heard a voice—her voice—sayin', "No! No! Doctor, you must not say that. He has fought for France and he shall live to fight again." Well, I tho't to myself, if there's any one with a voice like that, wants me to do her fightin' I'm sure not goin' to disappoint

her. So I grits my teeth and decides to stay. But my decision wouldn't have amounted to shucks if she'd deserted me.

Forty-eight hours she sat by me, never closing her eyes, her only rations a glass of milk now and then. Course I didn't reckon' the time. They told me all about it. And say Jim, when old man Death saw that little nurse was there to stay, he lets go his hold on me and sneaks off. So thanks to her, here I am wearing a Cross on my breast, instead of a white one six feet above. You know Jim, I've always fought shy of women folks. But here's one I'm willin' to go to the preacher and answer, I **do or I will as long as we both do live**—and then some. - - - - -

What am I talkin' about? You ought to know by this time that instead of a war victim—I'm a cupid refugee. I'm in love, all right, for the first, last, and only time, and you know me, Jim, that's the straight dope. If lifelong devotion and worldly goods will make her happy she'll never be melancholy. I've just discovered what those oil wells are for. And they say these French lasses are some aviators makin' money fly. - - - What's this sister stuff you're talkin'? Can't you understand me Jim?—I don't want her to be my sister. I want her to be my life long pardner, my wife.

A Catholic Sister! Come easy boy! Not a Nun! Well I'll be darned! And me a Baptist! Say Jim, do you reckon she knew what church I belonged to? - - - It don't make no difference to them Sisters you say. It seems that

this war aint no respecter of religions. Jim, how do they feel, when they get shell shock? I think I've got it. Why I've been so prejudiced against Catholics and said mean things about 'em. But say!—From now on its goin' to be different. I know that a religion that turns out an angel like her can't be wrong - - - What's that? Them sisters are all alike? Well they've sure got a corner on angels and hereafter when one of them sweet faced angel ladies passes me, my heart will stand attention, for they'll be the same as Old Glory to me.

AUNT MARIA'S ROMANCE

Aunt Maria, *who has enjoyed Single Blessedness for an unlimited number of years, announces her engagement.*

Why am I all perked up? Ye don't mean to tell me, ye aint hearn about my romance? (*Giggle old maid fashion*) - - - Yes, I be in love, at last I'm fittin' up to embark on the stormy sea of matrimony.- - - What's that? There's no fool like an old 'un.

(*Think for a moment*)

Well! as long as there's a pair of us, I guess we can hit it off - - - Eh? (*Put hand to ear as if a little deaf*) Oh! I ain't got spunk enuff to tell ye his name. (*Giggle*) Can't ye guess? - - - Si Overton? (*Scornfully*) Well I guess not! Why I wouldn't marry him, if he wuz the last man alive.—I've hearn his wife tell too much on him. Poor soul, she's dead—but I'll swear she's happier where she be now, though its doubtful, jes which place it is. One thing sure, if she lands in Satan's domain, she'll feel to hum.

(*Change to silly sentimental—giggle—coquettishly*)

Come to think about it, ye couldn't guess his name, not if you'd guess from now 'til

doomsday—Fer ye see, I got him out of a advertisement. (*Giggle*) Ain't I the smartest thing? (*Slowly and reminiscent*) Law! if I'd only tho't on it, forty years back - - - (*Sharp and decisive*) But then: There's no use cryn' over spilt milk—that's my motto—if the milk's spilt, let the cat lick it up, and seek for new pastures, where there's more cows to milk.

(*Back to silly sentimental*)

Its to be a church weddin'. (*Giggle*) He was a little contrary-wise on that point, but then, they all are. - - - (*Sharp and spontaneously*) Queer how men hate ter go ter church, jest 'cause they're married in one.—(*Emphatic*) **I** allus says 'taint the **collections** what bother, but the **recollections**. But I told Jonathan, (*Giggle*) that's his name,—it jes slipped out fer I knowed it—an whenever I say it, it gives me such a funny feelin.' (*Giggle*)(*Quick*) Tain't nothin' the matter with the name, its a beautiful name, if I can only git ust to speakin'it - - - But as I wuz sayin—I told Jonathan.—Ooh! Oh! (*Giggle*) Ain't I the silliest thing? Well anyway, I told him, I hadn't waited all these years, not to make some **time** over it, and ye can jes put it down, that this weddin's goin' ter be the biggest ter **do**, that ye ever laid eyes on. - - - I ain't spent my life fer nothin', readin' how these dukes and actresses git married.—I've thut it all out.—An' my lame knee ain't goin' to bother me a mite—instid of bein' a hindrance, its goin' ter add ter the occasion. (*Rapidly*) Course I've got gumption enuff ter know, thet I wouldn't create no sensation ter

go limpin' up the aisle—no matter how long my train is—I'm goin' ter have some bridesmaids scattered around, and I tho't it wouldn't be a bad idee, fer them ter have something ter do, so I'm goin' ter come up the aisle, riding in a wheel chair and let my bridesmaids do the pushin'. - - - Eh? No, I can't recall readin' of any of the highfullutins doin' it jes that a way. But I'll warrant they'll be up ter it next.

I wanted ter have a Matron of honor, but all my **suitable** relatives be dead long ago - - -.

The lady, that's makin' my weddin' outfit said I'd better wear my veil over my face all the time—tho't it'd be more becomin' an' I guess she wouldn't tell me if it warn't the latest thing. She ain't ben a bit stingy about the material, why its the thickest veil I ever saw—Oh there won't be no wear out to it - - - Yes, we're calculatin' on a weddin' tower (*Giggle*). I'd set my heart on spendin' my honeymoon at Niagara Falls, but one of my married friends wuz agin it. Said not to take him there as it wuz too good a place fer suicides - - -

(*Hand to ear*) What's that?

Oh they hain't no doubt, but its comin' off this time, so ye might as well be pickin' out the weddin' present.

(*Confidentially*)

The reason I'm so sure of this un, I'm gettin' him out of the Home for the blind.

AT RISING SUN

A Dramatic Indian Monologue for Girl

CHARACTERS

Flying Snow, *an Indian maiden, speaker present.*
Wolf Dog, *supposed to be present.*

SCENE

At the edge of a cliff.
NOTE: 'Tis said it is impossible for a full blood Indian to talk over a telephone as he can not be understood without the use of gestures. So in this monologue, it is advisable to use as many gestures as possibly can be put in. Speak with soft Southern accent. Give free rein to your emotions.

According to an Indian legend, the sun, moon and stars are one big family. The sun is the great chief, the moon is his wife, and the stars are his children whom he has to eat to keep himself alive. So when he is up in the morning, they flee out of his sight. Every month the moon grieves when the sun eats some of the stars and puts black over her face. The

stars are very happy with their mother and sing and dance as she passes among them.

In the days of the old Indian Territory, according to the custom of some of the tribal governments, an Indian sentenced to death, was allowed to go unguarded to his tribe and remain thirty days or more, roaming over the plains and doing what he would. At the end of the allotted time, he was to return of his own free will to be executed. Although escape would be easily accomplished no condemned Indian has ever betrayed this trust. He had the right to pick his own executioner; usually he chose his best friend and at the hour set stoically appeared ready to clasp the cold and bony hand of death.

In the early summer morning at the edge of a rocky cliff, with the black waters far below stood Flying Snow, a beautiful Indian maiden. By her side was her faithful Wolf Dog, to whom she pours out the secrets of her heart.

(*Stroke dog with left hand*). This night, we wait—morning come. (*Look up at moon over left shoulder.*) See! Wolf Dog! See kind Moon Mother! She heap happy—uncover face—(*Look at the stars.*) So star papooses laugh.—(*Change from smiling countenance to apprehension.*) Ugh! (*Draw shoulders up and give a slight shiver.* (Ugh!) *is not given explosively or loud but rather long drawn out.*) She forget, old Sun Big Chief, soon come out, his wigwam. (*Raise both arms straight out, parallel and on a level with shoulders, palms down—look to the*

rising sun.) When him head rise up, by yonder plain, (*Look to stars and continue to raise arms.*) not only star children scamper away frightened, but me, (*Cross hands on breast, bow head*) child of Earth, go with them. (*Drop hands to sides and defiantly throw head back.*) But Flying Snow, unafraid, go!

(*Again pet dog.*) Old Wolf Dog whine, kiss hand. (*Shake head.*) You no understand speech—yet you see heart. (*Nod head.*) You growl heap much, you sat by me in Warrior's Council—you hear Big Chief Ya-ho-la speak. (*With chest erect and arms folded across in typical Indian fashion, imitate the chief.*) "First morn, next two moons—you—Forest Fire, be shot at rising sun." Ugh! You growl, only fierce shout back of spirit mate. (*Meaning that the dog understood and his growl was only the echo of her soul.*) Me cry out, (*With arms outstretched in a passionate appeal.*) "Forest Fire, good brave, him kill Black Tiger. (*Show hate.*) Heap bad Buck!" Chief say back, (*With right hand upraised.*) "Red People, bury tomahawk—break scalping knife. An Indian not shed Indian blood. Be it so, I have spoken." Then me know old Wolf Dog, no good stay at council. When Flying Snow plead, (*With arms outstretched look beseechingly to a circle of red men*) wise men only grunt and shake heads. (*Shake head in despair.*) (*Then change, let face light up with rapture at the thought of her lover.*)

Forest Fire laugh—him no care—him sad, only for Flying Snow. (*Back to despair.*)

She break heart! She cause Forest Fire kill Black Tiger. Him heap ugly! (*Show intense hate and loathing.*) Ugh! (*Shrug shoulders*) She hate him! Ugh!! She no want marry him! But her people nod head, say yes. (*Pet dog.*) Wolf Dog, me no help love Forest Fire. (*Show by facial expression her great love.*) Him heap love Flying Snow. (*Quick action, using both hands indicate his going.*) Him go to Black Tiger—tell him—give much ponies—(*With hands in front, open and shut, twice to indicate the number of ponies.*) Many lands—!(*With arms in sweeping gesture to denote the vast extent of land.*) Him no marry Flying Snow. (*Back to hatred.*) Old Tiger shake head—say, "He go for squaw at setting sun." (*With fiendish joy.*) Then Forest Fire, kill him! Me heap glad!!

(*With utter abandonment.*) Flying Snow—Forest Fire much happy last two moons. Hunt deer! Fish many waters—ride much—Laugh heap!! (*Sudden transition from wild joy to utter despair.*) But last night **part!** (*Very slowly and with great effort.*) Time come Forest Fire go back—be **shot.** (*Pull self together and with a forced smile wave right hand at her departing lover.*) Me smile. Wave hand all while him ride away. (*Let hand drop on bowed head.*) Then **moan** heap much. (*Slowly raise head and shake off the tears.*) Now no cry more. (*Creep to cliff and look over.*) Look down, old Wolf Dog—see darking rushing waters. Listen! They calling! Calling—"Come Flying Snow, come with us, we take

you to Land of Souls." (*As she realizes that the Sun is ready to rise, she stoically prepares to leap over the cliff and enter the great beyond with her lover.*)

Rising Sun soon come. Dancing star papoose, gone, all. (*Wrap blanket around you and take step forward. Look back at dog, who is trying to prevent the rash act.*) No! Wolf Dog! No hold to blanket. Me want it in Happy Hunting Ground. (*With a sudden start see sun.*) The Sun!! With **you**, me go, Forest Fire! (*Look up.*) Oh Manitou. (*Manee-to.*) Great Spirit! Me come! (*Make a deep bow.*)

FOR THE GOOD OF THE FATHERLAND

The scene is a poorly furnished living room of an old German couple during the Great War. The wife is preparing the evening meal. The door opens slowly and the husband, who has only one arm enters. The wife speaks.

Place: *Somewhere in Germany.*

Ah, my Fritz: you are late! You have forgotten what day this is - - - No, I am mistaken. You **do** remember. But you expect no birthday cake. There is where **you** are mistaken. (*Showing cake*) See! Even though the war is still with us, you shall have your cake of the birthdays. But the sixty candles that should be on top; they—well part of them are in the cake - - - you are not pleased? You like not to be sixty? I never made you the **years** - - - I only made the cake. Husband, be not quarrelsome, because I pretend to be gay. I have not forgotten our boys—our five sons, whom we gladly gave for the glory of the fatherland - - - I should be ashamed because I had not more sons to give? - - - Ach! was I to blame because the rest were girls? Yes, I know, girls are nothing. They cannot be soldiers. But Fritz, our daugtres are still with us, and our sons—they—they will never be with us - - - I ought

to be proud that they died on the battlefield? I am—I am—for I know that God and the Emperor know best. But sometimes—Oh forgive—I can't help thinking I would like to have my boys come home—my hungry boys, come back, so I could - - - you want me to hush - - - Since you lost your arm I don't keep my place, you say. Ah! husband I still remember the beatings you used to give me - - - Yes, yes, I know I needed them. Do not think because now, you are the weaker I would not submit to the whipping - - - Although I should have one you are too tired to bother. Then I will take off your boots and you shall rest - - - You want me, not to come near you. What paper is this you give me? If it is a food order, then we must forget to eat entirely. It is for the good of the fatherland. Everything that is **bad** is for the good of the fatherland - - - You still strike hard, though it is your left hand. I did not mean that.—I am a true German! I give all for the Kaiser! Yes, yes, the paper, I will read(*Reads*). "Owing to the loss of men, the Imperial Government decrees that all old wives should agree to allow their husbands to take young wives and hereby authorizes"- - - Young wives! Fritz, what does it mean - - - Yes! Yes! I know I read it, but I don't understand - - - I will later - - - I see! I see! I, the mother of five soldiers, five dead soldiers, I—why I am of no use—because—because, I can have no more soldiers. God! and this Kaiser to whom I have given all, he gives this order - - - for the good of the fatherland. You say, it is all for the best.

Yes, yes, I know. It seems hard at first, but for the good of the fatherland. Wait, I will get some wine—wedding wine to eat with the birthday cake. You laugh and are happy, and so will I be. You cut the cake, while I get the wine and don't forget to count the hungry boys, our soldier boys. (*She leaves the room and returns shortly with several glasses of wine.*) You see, I remember the boys. No! No! it is not gruesome to pretend that the boys are here. Come! Let us drink to them—**my** boys—**your** dead soldiers. And now we will drink to your future live soldiers - - - Why do I not call them sons? Sons! No! for the good of the fatherland they must be soldiers, not sons - - - Ah, my Fritz, you eat your cake and drink your wine, and are happy once more. I too, I am happy, happier than you—for we—we go soon to meet our boys, our dead soldier boys - - - You are sick! Be not afraid—the pain will soon be over. You fall—the poison it is swift. Oh!—God forgive—But it is for the good of the fatherland.

DEATH, THE MAGICIAN

A dramatic reading of the Child Labor Problem.

August Crawford had received his death sentence, not from the judge of the law but from the highest tribunal. His death cell was the luxurious bed room of his palatial home, or could it be called Home for "Home, is where the heart is," and for twenty years his heart laid buried with his wife. He was glad he was conscious, for now he was free, to revel in the thought of their meeting. Though he was not a religious man, yet deep in his soul was imbedded that golden nugget, **Hope**, so that he had no doubt about her welcoming him across the border.

Twenty years ago, how well he remembered, he and his little love-mate had waited with impatient joy, for the coming of the bright messenger to bring his precious human parcel. But Heaven fearing, lest she might be selling herself on instalments, sent Birth's grim pardner, Death, who claimed his girl wife Margaret in payment for the wee baby, Margaret. How bitter had been his denunciations, because he had not been allowed a choice. But now he had no quarrel with Death, he might come as soon as he liked. He wondered vaguely if Death remembered all the harsh things he had said of him. Surely not, it was twenty years

ago and besides he must be accustomed to such abuse. No doubt he had been detained by an unexpected suicide. How well balanced was everything. He who had separated would reunite. After all, Death, was not such a bad fellow. And such a happy reunion theirs would be, he could picture the angels peeking through their harp strings, trying to catch a glimpse of their joyous meeting. He felt justly, that he deserved all the praise that she would lavish upon him. For had he not carried out her wishes to the uttermost? "Take care of my baby and make her happy" had rung in his ears, since the world began, so it seemed. When she had given up her life that this other might be, it were as if the moon had ceased to shine leaving a lone star in her place. So is it any wonder that he shrank from the tiny bundle, old Hagar, the nurse held for him to see, fearing lest he might curse the light of the usurping star? It was then he realized to carry out his wife's wish he must needs send away this dread reminder of the vacuum of his life. Though he had never seen this child whom Death had traded him, he had done all in human power to make her life one of endless joy and happiness. Her inheritance from him would continue its revenues unto the third and fourth generations.

Augustus Crawford was the "Business is Business" species of a business man. So when he found it more profitable to employ child labor in his mills he did so with no compunction. Old Hagar, the nurse, had remonstrated with

him saying that her children had been denied their childright to happiness and now her grandchildren, weaker than their fore-fathers were but human food for the grinding power of the mills. He argued that these poor people with their enormous families should count it a blessing, to have this means of ridding themselves of their surplus burdens. He generously paid all funeral expenses so they were not out of pocket, when a child or two died. Besides these low people did not have the finer sensibilities, so were not capable of feelings such as his cultivated soul possessed.

Some one was at the door, he could hear the nurse expostulating. Was it Death? If so, why did she not bid him enter. "But I have something to say he must know." It was old Hagar. He thought dimly she was coming for the last time to plead for the mill children. Well he would humor her by allowing an interview, although he knew he would not grant her request. "Let her come in, you may go until I call you." He spoke so composedly the nurse was reassured. He heard the door close softly behind her and then saw Hagar's old bent form standing beside him. He smiled feebly, "I have been expecting a visitor, you look like his sister." "Sir, this is no time for jokes, what I have come to tell, will be of interest. Listen: Twenty years ago, my son's wife forfeited her life that her baby might live. A similar case was that of your wife. T'was an easy matter and God prompted me—for think you not, He has a sense of humor—to take this child of

yours, born to luxury and in her stead place my own, the child of misery. But now, she is dead, your child, killed by your will, all these years has she toiled in your life robbing mills. Had you known, when I pleaded for those children that I was begging for your own child's life your answer would have been far different. Eh!" She laughed a dry rasping sob. The smile had faded from his face. And all the undertaker's art could not erase the awful look of terror to which it had been changed by Death.

THE NEWSBOY'S PHILOSOPHY

NOTE: *In this monologue give just the suggestion of a tough kid. Although his heart is true gold, he has had no culture or advantages. Talk loud and with a "I KNOW IT ALL" manner. Pull cap down occasionally and with arm straight down and quite close to body throw out the right hand palm down in typical bowery fashion. This gesture is used for emphasis in places as*—See!—Believe me!—Etc. *Don't overdo or use too many times or it will detract. Remember to hold imaginary bundle of newspapers under left arm.*

(*Bob, the newsboy, hands out the straight dope to a beginner.*)

Take it from me kid, de newsboy biz aint so woise 'n I knows—see—cause I'se ben on de job, ever sence I could holler- - - Aw cut out de whinin' 'n snifflin'—dat sob stuff don't sell yer papers. De guys dat buys want a grin thrown in- - - Cold? Course its cold! Ye didn't spects a summer day in January—did youse? Say! De cold may make me color blue, but youse kin bet youse life, it aint makin' me feelin's dat a way - -

I knows youse new at de biz and let me tip youse off, it aint no limousine road youse

travelin', ceptin to dodge em.

While we's a waitin' fer de crowd, I'll put youse wise to de game, so's youse kin be a prefessional like me—see!

If you spects ter be a winner, youse first, last, and center name, is got ter be **Hustle.** Me mudder's got a slogan, what says, "Taint birth nor rank nor state, but de git up and git what makes men great." 'N me mudder she knows. Course I'se got a drunk, no count fadder—but me mudder and me aint complainin' nor askin' fer a new deal. She sez, anybuddy kin play de good hands—its how youse plays de bad ones, what counts. 'N don't youse be wishin' youse one of 'em rich kids, whats born wid a silver spoon in their mouth either. Mudder sez, "Dey most generally fergits to take the spoon out 'n so dey gits choke on it."

See dat swell guy cross de street. Well he aint no piker! He's the sure nuff goods! Youse don't hev ter bother erbout change when youse hands him de printed page. He puts up de feed fer us boys Xmas 'n I over hears him talkin', 'n he sez, he'd give a million to hev a appetite like mine. So youse sees he aint got nothin' on me. He may hev de dough ter buy de swell eats, but he can't do nothin' but gaze at 'em.

Mudder sez, most of em sufferin' from overeatin' same as us does fer not gittin' enuff but their pain 's lots worse. 'N these here dames wid de swell rags, what youse sees all dolled up. 'N youse thinks they've got a paid policy on Heaven. Well, take it from me kid, they

aint so happy. A guy, what named Style, makes em hop around somethin' fierce. In de good old summer time when we uns is hitin' de pavement in our bare feet, dey hev ter wear shoes—'n shoes what hurts, too. 'N—yes! How's youse like ter hev ter pull out youse eyebrows? Well, dey does!

Believe me! I aint tradin' wid no one. Why kid! Youse oughtin' to be kickin'—Look what this here paper sez. "Banker robbed and murdered." Well youse aint never hearn of a newsboy being **killed** fer his coin, hev youse? I tells youse we uns got a snap. 'N did youse see erbout the strikes—I tho't it wuz de base ball dope, er I wouldn't hev read it. Gee! But ef them labor leaders wuz to git on de base ball team they'd make Ty Cobb look like a baby wid a fly swatter.

Now pard git wise 'n cut out de blubberin' 'n go ter bluffin'. I'd ruther be a cheerful idiot than a wise old grouch, any day.

Well S'long.

(*Leave calling loudly*) Paper! Mister, paper! Paper! All erbout the murder!

THE FIDDLER

NOTE: *To be effective music must be used with this monologue. The "Irish Washerwoman" is best suited. The calls in the parentheses are half sung and half called in a nasal tone. But the short calls between the dashes are decided calls and long drawn out. Remember to give the imaginary dancers plenty of time to go through the steps.*

CHARACTERS

Country Fiddler, *speaker present.*
Sal, *girl at piana, also present.*
Dancers, *supposed to be present.*
SCENE: *Country dance.*

I've ben axed ter announce, thet next Saterday night, the Literary's goin' to give a box supper, over on Turkey Crick, fer the benifit of the Red Cross. (*Spits*) All you boys are requested ter bring yer appetites and yer week's pay, and the gals will do the rest. (*Chewing and spitting*)

Fer fear you'll all git scared and bust out a winder light a gittin' away, I thought I'd better tell yer, thet later in the evenin', Lem Stewart, who has been sojournin' up in the

city, fer the last few weeks, is goin' ter give a exhibition round dance (*Chews*). He's ben havin' a hard time a larnin' thet best girl of his'n, them new fangled steps, but they think thet they can step her through.

(*Calling*) Git yer pardners fer the next quardrille. (*To the girl at piano*) Give me "A". .....(*Go through business of tuning imaginary fiddle.*) Bill, air you so all fired humley, thet none of the gals will dance with ye? There's Mahitable Doolittle over thar in the corner, jest a dyin' to shake her feet. Go on over there, ye lazy cuss! and fill up this set. (*Giving the typical farmer swing and kick*) Gosh all hemlocks! If there aint Silas Spookendike. Hello, Si! I thought you wuz too blame old, ter be a cuttin' up sech capers.

All set! (*To real girl at piano who plays "Irish Washwoman"*) Hit her up, Sal. (*Starts playing an imaginary fiddle*) Balance all——Swing——All jine hands and circle ter the left——Do-See-do. (*All the time playing the fiddle and keeping time to the music by coming down with his right heel. Also chewing.*) (First couple out ter the right——Trail yer lady——Retrail yer baby.)

——Swing——

(Once and a half and a half ye go
All you gals there grab a beau.)

——On ter the next——

(Swing thet gal thet is so sweet,
Swing thet gal with the great big feet.)
(Once and a half and a half ye go,
Watch out Pete ye'll stub yer toe.)

——On ter the next.——
(Ladies round ladies,
And gents round gents,
Gents round ladies.
And ladies round gents.)
——Swing——
(Once and a half and a half yer go
Grab yer pardners and do-see-do.)
——Pardner whirl——
——Corner whirl——
(Treat em all alike
If it takes all night.)
(Grab yer pardner
And sail away.)
(Chase thet rabbit, chase thet squirrel
Chase thet pretty girl round the world,
Chase her there and back agin,
Swing yer pardner and al-le-men.)
(*Music stops.*) (*During the last part the fiddler does a few steps, but still continues fiddling and calling.*)

Well, Bill, yer got thru thet without fallin' down more than once.

(*Calling to Hank at back of room.*) Well, Hank! Ef ye can git away from thet lemonade borrel, I'd like ter have yer spell me a bit, so I can wet my own whistle.

SECOND YOUTH

After having attended a series of health lectures by W. Earl Flynn, an advocate of physical culture, diet and modern hygiene, old Grandfather Jones voices his sentiments.

The' haint no comfort in growin' old, sence that man Flynn has cum to town.
Usto git sum sypathiz'n, but 'pears the world's plum upside down.
The Good Old Book sez, "Three score years an' ten," is purty nigh ye're limit,
But sence then, it's ben discovered, them words warn't up to the minute.
For if ye'll only throw away yer crutches an' straighten up and dance,
At seventy, ye'll feel like a boy, that's jest put on his first long pants.

Usto be woke up, with the appetizin' smell of a buckwheat cake,
Instid ye git up carefully with a lot of exercise to take,
An' if yer neglected stummick calls fer food, before it's dinner time,
Ye drink a cup of water, an' hand yerself a lemon,—minus rine.
When the blame noon whistle blows, an' ye put

yer feet under the table,
Ye'd think ye'd earned a right to fill up full an' eat all that yer able.

But the hygienic menus, are composed of evrything ye hates,
Yer beefsteak is supplemented by whole wheat bread, buttermilk an' dates.
Then ye chews, an' chews, an' chews, 'till ye make a cow with her cud ashame,
Yer face gets lop-sided an' twisted an' yer por jaws are sore an' lame.
In the good old days ye tuk yer bath when Saturday rolled around,
Now it 'pears ye have to take **six**, in one day, in order to be sound.

These was my honest feelin's fore I saw Dad Flynn an' got converted,
Now I wouldn't swop back to rheumatics fer all back checks inserted.
I'm feelin' like a boy again an' I'm takin' out a college course.
It's great to be young at sixty with all the common sense of a horse,
So here's hopin' ye'll keep on preachin' another hundred years or more,
An' reach Heaven with no dyspectic angel to greet you at the door.

HARD WORK PREFERRED

(NOTE: *A darky walks with a shambling gait, toes pointed out the opposite from that which is commonly called "pigeon toes." He ducks his head and looks up at the person addressed, thereby showing the white of his eyes. Oftentime for emphasis, he puts the same stress on each syllable of the word.*)

(*A traveling man, thinking to have some fun, with the darkey porter, offers him a job with the following results.*)

Yas suh, yas suh, I shuah wants to make ten dollars, I needs de money, the tips I ben gettin' lately am few and far behind. Dey haint ben no one in dis hostelry but married gent'men an' dar wives has done fleeced dem all of dar sparse change. - - - Oh no, sor, I'se suited wid de porterin' vocation, but a quarter or two now and den sartinly do add excitement to de trade. (*Laughing. Ya! Ya!*)

Oh, yas suh, I can git off all right. I thinks I recollict you speakin' dat de sum in totem for dis little task was de specific amount of ten silver dollars? - - - M'huh. I'se 'mencin' to feel like a shuah nuf American heiress——but I tells you right now, boss, I haint gwine to in-

vest my ill gotten riches in no foolish forrin titles, no suh. I done pick out a yaller gal, dat ken fry my corn cakes good enuff fo' dis chile. And say man! When I done shake dat particular ten, befor' de unaccustomed eyes, ob dat gal, she's gwine to roll dem dark lamps ob hern, an' look up into my manly countenances, an' say, in of voice, you'd hab no trouble in extinguishin' as far as the back alley, "Mr. Nigger, I'se yours, hurry up an' git dat parson man ter speak dem peaceful words climaxin' in de good old words ob de sageful, barrin' affinites an' sternographers. Nothin' but death gwine to part us."

Say boss, when does you reckon I'd better commence on dis aforesaid job? - - - To-night at twelve, and ef I done heard you corrictly, I continues in yor parsimonious employ till six in de mornin'; it appears I'se gwine ter be de night shift. - - - Oh, no suh, I don't mind de time, ef I done git sleepy, I'll disremember de numerative ob de ten plunks an' my eyes will stay open wider dan alligator's mouth on a summer day. (*Ya! Ya! Laughing*) - - - - (*A decided transition takes place. Blink eyes and roll. From now on he is one scared nigger.*)

What! (*Stuttering*) What! What dat you say? You is an undertaker. Not one obe dem gent'men dat spends his time sociatin' wid dead corpses. Man! Man!! You shuah is defective. I'se ben fooled wid yor appearances. I, I sposes you was a shuah nuff human bein.' - - - Say boss, dis business transaction you an' me done culminated don't hab nothin' to do wid yor chosen profession, do hit, boss? Case

ef it do! me an' you is gwine to part right now. - - - - -

All you wants me to do, is to set by de side, ob one dem departed ones! I wants ter ax you right **now**, how many **odders** does you figure is gwine to be settin' by de side ob **me**? - - - You calculates dat hits a one man's job. Well yor calculator's done picked out de wrong one man, dats all. - - - - No suh I haint forgot about de ten dollars, but de discription ob der place am not enhancin'. You say dat hits in de country about five miles an dat de person in question done git tired livin' alone in his one room mansion an' he done **murder** (*look behind*) hisself on account ob de lonesomenesses! Well ef de remedy is left to dis nigger, I reckon dat lonely man's gwine to enjoy his solotude a spell longer, cayse I haint after acquaintin' myself wid no such person, I'se afeard in de process ob de introduction. I couldn't say, "Happy ter meet yor" in de off hand way I usually presumes. - - - -

Yas sor, I know hit's an easy job jest a settin', but I prefers hard labor.- - - - -

You say, deys some s'putation about der corpse bein' sho enuff daid. He keeps openin' his eyes all de time! An' all is acquired ob me, is ter keep his hands folded an' his eyes shut! Well, I wants ter state right now ef dat daid man wants to go down into his grave wid his eyes open, I'm **AGREEABLE.** - - - - -

You say, you'd hab a autermoile take me out an' bring me back in de mornin',—de outgoin' trip would be all right, but I reckon

'twouldn't be necessary to come back atter me in de mornin', cayse dey wouldn't be **NO PASSENGER**!---- Why, Mr Undertaker, when dat corpses 'menced blinkin' his eyes preparatory to openin' dem, dis nigger would be in a place **remote**! -- Yas suh, I needs de ten dollars, but I reckon I'd do dat much damage to my clothes a-gittin' out ob dat house. - - - Yas suh, I knows I done promised, but I'se like de weather, I'se subject to change!

UNCLE EPHRAIM TALKS TO A WAR HERO

(NOTE: *Walk with one hand on imaginary cane, other hand on back. He is bent and old, but with the heart of a youth. He teases the young soldier good-naturedly, and laughs heartily over his own jokes.*)

Uncle Ephraim, *the old colored wit of the town meets a young negro soldier, just returned from the war, enthusiastic over his own exploits, and greets him as follows*:

Howdy, howdy, Sargant! So you des returned from de front? G'long boy, you knowed you never got no closer to de front den de back door, and de **kitchen** door, at dat.- - -What's dat you say?- - -You wuz a charger. Boy, you never had ter to jine de army to be a charger ef I done recollect corrictly, **dat's** what you wuz for' you went to de war. (*Laughing Ya! Ya!*) Many de time I seen you come in de store, buy yor sack ob terbaccer and **charger**. (*Ya! Ya!*) You shuah ben trained in de chargin' all right. - - - What's dat you say? When you crept up on dem Germans you do hit wid baited breath. Baited breath? Boy! What you bait yor breath wid, anyway? I hopes you hab sense enuf ter put de right kind ob bait on dat breath of yorn. Why, boy, you could hab cotch a

whole regiment ob hungry Germans ef you des baited yor breath wid weenies and sourer craut. (*Ya*! *Ya*!) .....You say you done shelled a lot of dem German trenches. G'long wid you! You knows dat de only shellin' you done, wuz shellin' peanuts. (*Ya*! *Ya*!) - - - What'd dat you oratin' about? Dat da ricoliction ob de way you all go ober de top done set yor brain on fire right now ter think about hit? - - - Set yor brain on fire! I don't see no smoke issuing from yor head piece. (*Sniff*) I don't even smell em scorchin'. (*Disgusted*) Yor brain on fire! Don't make no foolisher statements like dat to me agin. Boy! youse got to hab material to burn fore you can start a fire. Ef youse under da alusion dat yor brains am grey matter, youse color blind, dats all, cayse instid ob grey dey's a vermillion green. (*Ya*! *Ya*!) Don't you eber waste no money gettin' yor brains insured, for ef dey wuz ter cotch on fire, all you's hab ter do, is ter weep one little tear and you'd hab all de water necissary to put out de fire what your brains would make. (*Ya*! *Ya*!) - - - You say dat Gen. Pushin' put ten thousands colored troops in front ob ten thousand white ones. Why, boy! dat's no military stratigin—put the niggers in front ob de oders!! I' tell **yo** what happined - - - I'll bet dey wuz ten thousand white soldiers **tramped to death.** - - - I spose you had no difficulty in hearin' da command to retreat. - - - What's dat?—deys no sich word in de United States Army! Don't dey never say retreat? - - - Dey do, when deys out on a skylark. An' de only

thing dat an American soldier knows to do when dey say "Retreat" is to **set 'em up again.** (*Ya*! *Ya*!) Goodbye, boy! I reckon I'll pre-amulate down to de corner and see ef I can git some one to retreat me.

A LITERARY SHADOW

Comedy negro-dialect monologue for a woman.

CHARACTERS

Rosindy, *a cullud lady, speaker present.*
Mistress, *supposed to be present.*
(NOTE: *Put on all the airs that a cullud lady of distinction would assume.*)

Yas'm, Missy, I reckon I'se what you'd designate as one of dem lady authoresses. I knows dat I done do enuff scriblin' ter desarve some sort of an appellation. - - Uh Huh, Ise allus bin afflicted dat uh way. Why Missy! when I war des uh undeveloped small adult, I war, what you white folks calls chillen's what am unutterable smart—procoxious. When dem udder black pickcaninies would be stealin' de fruit ob de watermillion vine, preparatory to delightin' dar insides, wid de aforesaid mentioned, des chile, war absorbedly, in some quiet cornor devourin' de mentality fruit ob some preponderous volume. Yas'm, I war what dey calls a book-**bug**! - - - Oh, yas'm, I means a book worm, I knowed dat it done b'long to some catagory of de animal kingdom. - - - No'm I haint never had nothin' published. You see dees heah editor gent'men haint bedowed wid

de higher mentalities dat am widstowed on we authoresses. Now I reckon deys not ter blame cayse dey done be lackin' in artistical temper dey des bin bo'n dat uhway, dat's all!

Ise come to de delusion, dat Ise gwine to keep de chilins ob my brain—home wid Mammy. I done send some of dem mind rearlin's, dat my brain done given birth to, out to de unsuspectin' public, and when dey gits back to me, dat raised dem, Lawsy! Lawsy! Missy, de sardonic remarks dat dem editorial people done append to my lit'ary off springs, done make me a convert to race suicide. Why ef I war to hearken to de warnin's ob dem publishin' gentlemen, dey wouldn't be no more additions to my literacy family. An' M m m! Dey aint nothin' dat I prefers doin' ter authorin', but when I does, Ise propelled to be in de mood - - - Ya-as'm, I knows dey is some, what can do forced writin', but I'se one dat has to be moody. - - -

Oh, yas'm, Ise done do novelous writin', but Ise been tol, dat Ise much preferable in defective stories. But say, Missy, what I does shine forth in, is purblime po-**et-tree**! M! m! m! I could jes die poetasterin'. - - - Oh yas'm, Ise familarized myself wid blanket verse - - - Sho! I writes by de diameter, don you spose I knows poem writin'? - - - You say dat Mr. an' Mrs. Browning am favor**ites** of yourn? Say honey, dat man an' his wife didn't bof spend dah time at de writin' vocation? What dey do for a **livin'**. - - - Nothin' but writin'! I bet dem two never suffered none wid de gout. - - - You

all says, I ortah study some ob de great poets! I tells you de reason I don't disturb dem poethodicals, is Ise afeared dat I might be declined to imitate dem, an' I prefers bein' wholely aboriginal.

SAMMY SEES HIS FIRST CIRCUS

Comedy negro-dialect monologue.

CHARACTERS

Sammy, *litte negro boy, speaker present.*
Mammy, *supposed to be present.*
(NOTE: *Sammy is very much excited.*

Oh Mammy! Mammy! Ise done ben to Heben all dis day long. - - - N'om I aint crazy. Oh Mammy please don' whip me, til I tells you all about hit. - - - Yas'm, I tuk de clothes to de lady, jes you tols me to, an' den I starts wolkin' fo' home, jes as fast I could, an' all at onctet I hears de ban' a playin', an' I goes runnin' over to de front street, an' dar right fo' my eyes, wuz de biggest payrade dat you eber seed. It b'longed to de circus, an' Mammy I tells you de truf, my haid told me to turn uhround an' come home, but my feet wouldn't let me. No'm I jes couldn't persuade em, no way, ter bring me home, so I had to go erlong wid dat payrade.

- - - No'm, I haint had nothin' to eat all day, but I shuah done seed eberting. - - - No'm I haint spend no money gettin' in de tent—I done carried wata' fo' de el'phants, an' M'm! M'm! how dem el'phants do like to drink,—dey don' say nothin', but de way dey do loop up dat watta'. But purty soon dey jes nattu'-ally got worn out drinkin'. I knowed dey didn't git filled up though. But dey had to stop to rest, an' so did I. Den de man what owns de circus give me and de udder boys a piece of paper what says we could go in de show, free. An' we don'ts stop fo' nothin' but goes right in.

An' dey had waggonloads ob all kinds of annimals, wid iron bars in front of dem—to keep de folks from stealin' em, I reckon. An' Oh Mammy, one annimal had a neck like a telegraph pole, I shuah would like to be him in de apple orchard, but he wouldn't count for nothin' in de watermillion patch, his legs is so long, he never could git his mouth to de groun'. An' dey had hip-hip--hippopottamuseses and rhinenoseserezes and some what I can't ricolect dar names.

One of the boys wanted me to go see de el'phants eat peanuts, but I'se scaired dey want uhnudder drink.

Turrectly we found a big doah to a bigger tent, and no buddy stops us, so we goes on in and sits down in one end. An' Mammy, I knows it wuz a mile to de udder end ob dat tent. An' de mostest people. Why Mammy, de meetin' house uhwouldn't haf hold em'. An' de ban' played and de el'phants come and danced and done de funniest tings. Lawdy! Mammy, dey don't look like dey knowed so much.

An' an' Oh Mammy! you'd uh-died uh-laffin at de men ,what dey calls clowns. (*Laughing*) Dey had de funniest faces, an dey done act so perdiculous. I lost most of the show jes a watchin' em. - - - - - Oh I couldn't tell you all de funny tings dey done. Dey jes cut up all de time, an' dey got in de way so, I'se scaired de ci'cus man would put em out.—I'se so hungry! Aint you gwine to give me no supper. Oh goody! Youse got roastin' ears

- - - Oh Mammy, I forgot to tell yo', dey has some annimals, what dey calls monkees an' one of dem looked perzactly like you.

THE SALVATION ARMY LASSIE

CHARACTERS

Jennie, *an adorable Salvation Army lass from overseas, speaker present.*

Mrs. Vantrees, *a lady of affluence, very cold and haughty, supposed to be present.*

SCENE: *Luxurious living room of Mrs. Vantrees' home on Fifth Avenue.*

TIME: *At the close of the Great War.*

Jennie has come with news of Mrs. Vantrees' soldier son.

(NOTE: *Jennie speaks with just a suggestion of Irish accent, not broad, but rather a slight rhythmic tone. She is very sweet and timid, yet full of mischief. This monologue requires lots of action and pantomime. It is very effective in costume.*)

(*Very timidly.*) May I sit, please? - - - Thank you so much. (*Sits down gingerly on edge of chair.*) It isn't, I'm so tired, but I—I guess I'm a tiny bit scared. - - - - Yes, yes I will try to be brief. - - - Is it a train you have to catch? - - - Oh, just a party. (*Relieved.*) Then it won't matter so awfully much, if you was—I mean, if you were just a wee bit late. (*Hesitatingly*)

I can't seem to know just where to begin.—You see I have so much to tell you.- - - Yes, I am sure it will interest you. (*Suddenly*) Mrs. Vantrees, I don't wish to seem impolite, but I feel so uncomfortable, when you look at me through that—what you call it—Lorgnette—it reminds me of the periscope of the enemy.- - Thank you, now I feel better. Though it does seem a little chilly in here. (*Shivers*) Its queer, I should feel the cold for I'm out in all kinds of weather. You see, I just came back from Sunny France and who ever nicknamed France **Sunny,** must have been brought up in a cave—for they have about as much sunshine over there as a profiteer has conscience - - - Yes, I am a war worker, I did my bit, as the boys say of the cooties, they did their **bite.** But now the war is over and most of the boys are back.—But here I am, way off of the subject.—I've brought you news of your son, but I can't seem to know how to tell you, and I do want to break it to you gently.- - - Oh! Now I have frightened you. But you might as well prepare for the worst.- - - No! No! He isn't dead.—He's—he's—he's in love with me and says he's going to marry me! That's all! (*Jennie runs over to Mrs. Vantrees.*) Oh Mrs. Vantrees, please don't faint. I couldn't help it. honest I couldn't. You see, I didn't know he was rich,—in the army a soldier, is just a soldier and we fed them all alike.- - - Oh yes! Of course, it is quite impossible.- - - Yes, yes, I understand, such a vast difference in our social positions. About as much difference as

this house and the trench he's been living in. - - - So your son will be Earl Vantrees, the third, you see, I didn't know—I thought he was a beginner ancestor like me, not a second hand one. - - - And this is the house of your great grandfather. Then you didn't have to work and buy it your self.—That's different, you see, I wasn't lucky that way. I am an orphan,—don't even know who my parents are. - - - Oh, I know it must seem funny to you, just weighed down with ancestors. But I don't mind, you see there's an air of mystery about me—I like to imagine I'm a great lady. I've picked out King Albert of Belgium for one of my relatives; you see, choosing your own ancestors has its advantages, for you have the whole world to pick from. Once I did try to find out about myself. I'm sure my name is Genevieve instead of Jennie, but I can't prove it, so I guess I'll always go by the name of Jenny. (*Suddenly*) Say, you are Earl's **real** mother, aren't you? - - - Well you see, you are not a bit like him, I thought you might be a step-mother or something. - - - You don't believe in love do you? - - - No, of course not. I suppose you've heard the saying, Love makes the world go round.—I guess that's the reason it gets dizzy every so often. - - - If you will just calm down—try to be like me. (*Poor Jennie, is anything but calm.*) I'll tell you the reason I came to see you and then (*Melodramatically*) I will pass out of your life for ever—I saw that at a movie. I've brought you a recipe for doughnuts. You know, Earl was our champion doughnut eater.

He used to say, he knew why Heaven was called the Holy City, because it was paved with doughnuts.—I was afraid you might not make your doughnuts like he was used to eating and I just couldn't be happy thinking about it. - - -

You never made a doughnut in all your life, Oh goodness! goodness! Sure, but your ancestors did neglect your education! Didn't teach you how to make doughnuts? Well then I don't see any other way out of it. I guess I'll have to marry him.—I suppose you are thinking that war is all Sherman said it was. - - - Of course, I don't mean that, I was just joking. I don't want to bring unhappiness to you and if its best for Earl, why it won't matter about me, I'm used to giving up. - - -

Please don't pity me, and whatever you do, **don't** offer me money, I know in the movies, it makes an awful hit, when the girl says, "Take back your gold!" but you see, I know so many poor people that need it, I might forget and take it. - - - Why Mrs. Vantrees, you're not crying?—I was only trying to make you laugh. Oh please don't—you'll have me doing it next. And that's strictly against orders. You wouldn't do for a soldier, a soldier had to keep his smile in as good condition as he kept his gun, and he used it lots more. If you had tears to shed, you prepared to let them run down your throat and kept your smile working overtime. Those were our orders over there. There was no **union** hours for smiling.—Why Mrs. Vantrees, I didn't dare take my smile off, even at night,

when I went to bed. - - -

You begin to see things in a new light? Maybe its my hair, I used to think it was just red, but Earl calls it a beautiful auburn. - - - You consent? Oh Glory Hallelujah! (*Clap hands in typical Salvation Army fashion.*) Oh excuse me! I thought I'd got another convert. Mrs. Vantrees, if its not asking too much, will you show me my ancestors, I want to know the worst.

CAMMOUFLAGE OF THE HEART

Time, 1918. During the Great War.
Place, New York city.
Time of presentation, fifteen minutes.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Franque Godfrey.....Younger sister of Anna.
Anna Godfrey....Fiancee of Capt. John Willacy.

SCENE: *Private sitting room of the two sisters,* Anna *and* Franque. *Furniture, white wicker with blue cretone draperies.*

TIME: 2:30, *on a summer afternoon.*

Discovered at rise—Franque standing at the window waving at the soldiers who are heard marching on the street below. The band is playing, "The Stars and Stripes Forever." As the music dies away Franque returns to her chair at left of table and resumes her Red Cross work. She picks up the framed photograph of Captain John Willacy, which is on the table near her.

While she very longingly gazes at his picture, Anna enters unnoticed by Franque. When Anna sees Franque with the picture, she tiptoes cautiously out of the room. She can then be heard singing. Franque hastily puts the picture on the table and starts knitting. Anna re-enters still singing, sits at dressing-table, removes her hat, takes big box

of bon bons from her beautiful shopping bag. Goes to chaise lounge at the right and sits down. She opens the box of candy and eats.

Franque. I suppose you have been riding with Mr. Van Loan.

Anna. Can you blame me? He's such a dear rich old fellow.

Franque. I will admit, he is old and rich but not dear.

Anna. My dear, **he** is dear because he comes high and there is nothing cheap about him.

Franque. How can you?

Anna. How can I, what?

Franque. Eat candy!

Anna. It's quite simple—watch me—first you select a choice morsel from the center of the box, raise it to the level of your - - -

Franque. Anna, don't!

Anna. Very well, I thought, since you had not partaken of the forbidden sweets in so long, you might have forgotten how.

Franque. You know, I pledged myself not to eat candy, until the war is over.

Anna. Oh! now I see the reason you are so anxious for the war to end.

Franque. I, anxious for the war to end! No! I pray it may never end until the god of war is burned at the stake, though millions and millions will be caught in the fire and consumed with the monster. From the ashes of those brave soldiers will arise the goddesses, Democracy and Liberty, twin sisters who shall evermore rule the world.

Anna. Well, I am tired of these meatless,

wheatless, sweetless, and goodness knows how many other less days.

Franque. I suppose you prefer careless, senseless, heartless - - -

Anna. And let me add—spyless.

Franque. Ah! yes, spyless. I agree with you there. America should free herself from the foe within.

Anna. Hush Franque! You have heard so many war lectures, I believe you could give one yourself. But in Heaven's name! **don't** practice on me!

Franque. Well it wouldn't hurt you to hear one.

Anna (*Arising and tiptoeing to the doors, and coming down center with fingers on lips*). Sh! Sh! I have a secret, which, were I to unfold would get me interned.

Franque (*Realizing that her sister is up to some nonsense*). What **do** you mean?

Anna. I think I must be one of those dreadful Huns.

Franque. A Hun!

Anna (*Going to the candy box*). Yes, for I am always **hun-gry.**

Franque. Anna, how can you be so frivolous.

Anna. It's easy enough. Instead of devoting all your time to the Red Cross, do as I. Attend dances, matinees, and carabets. Oh! that's the life.

Franque. Not the life for a true American girl.

Anna. You don't mean to infer, I'm not. Why I am the first to stand, when the National

air is played, and the other night at the opera, I ruined a perfectly good pair of gloves clapping, when the Flag was unfurled.

Franque. And so you think you have done your bit. Maybe you have, but every true American should not be satisfied, just doing his bit. He should be like the silver dollar; ready to do eight bits. Then and then only will the Eagle spread his wings in triumph.

Anna. Cease! Just because I say I am doing my bit is no reason you should compare me to twelve and a half cents. If you must be complimentary, say I look like thirty cents.

Franque. If I could only make you serious.

Anna. Make me serious! Almost as huge a task as the Allies have to whip the Germans, and they, like you, better give up.

Franque. Give up! No, they will never give up until Prussian militarism is crushed and the Kaiser learns that might is right; only when it is the Might of Righteousness. Then he will hang his head in shame before the STARS AND STRIPES.

Anna. His head will be hanged all right when the U. S. boys get over there and he will see stars and be wearing stripes in a place—well—where there is no conservation of coal.

Franque. Bravo! That's the spirit! That sounds like my sister of old. (*Looks at photograph of Captain Willacy.*)

Anna. Sister of old! I was afraid you said my old sister.

Franque. That's the way your soldier boy, Captain John Willacy, would want you to talk.

Anna. I meant to tell you, I just received a message about him.

Franque. About him! (*Rising and coming over toward Anna who is on the chaise—she stops in the center of the room much agitated*) He isn't wounded! Oh, tell! Is he wounded?

Anna. Well one thing he will never see where he was hit.

Franque. Anna, what do you mean? (*Sits down beside Anna.*) Tell me! Don't keep me in suspense! Tell me!

Anna (*Rising and crossing to the right of the the table*). There's nothing to tell. Captain Willacy was simply too curious. Along came a German shell and puff! out went his eyes.

Franque. His eyes! Oh how terrible!—You don't mean he is blind!—Never see again! Oh how terrible!—How terrible! (*Almost breaks down.*)

Anna. The only thing he will ever see is, that he was a fool to go to war.

Franque. Where is he? Aren't you going to him at once?

Anna (*Crossing to left of the table and sits in the chair*). Indeed I am **not.** Instead, I am going to send back his ring.

Franque. Send back his ring! Anna, how can you be so cruel!

Anna. You don't expect me to marry a blind man.

Franque (*Rising and going to the center*). Don't you dare to speak of him, as blind man. He is one of God's soldiers who has laid his eyes
the altar of his country as many another

brave boy will do. I can see the long procession of American boys passing by their Country's Shrine; some leaving their eyes, some their hands, their arms, their legs and if need be, their entire bodies in sacrifice to the Mother land. It is terrible, yet magnificent, losing some of the physical and gaining more of the soul.

Anna. Well it may be all beautiful, but for my part I don't care to be the wife of a soul. I prefer a millionaire.

Franque (*Sits in a chair at the right of the table with her arms on the table looking across at Anna*). Anna! You are not going to throw John over for that horrid old money bags, Mr. Van Loan.

Anna. Why not? I am sure he loves me, for he is willing to pay the price of a million.

Franque. A million! And you would marry for money instead of love.

Anna. Oh! It will be a love match. For you see, I love the money.

Franque. I would rather marry John, and work for him with my bare hands, the rest of my life, than to marry someone, whom I did not love.

Anna. One might imagine **you** were in love with John yourself.

Franque (*Rising and facing Anna*). I am! And always have been! When I thought you loved him my lips were sealed, but now, I will tell you all.

Anna. Do, I am sure it will be interesting.

Franque. Oh, I am so happy and I know John will share my happiness, for when he was

here last, it seemed were it not for you John would have returned my love.

Anna (*Rising*). Ho! Ho! YOU little rascal! Flirting behind my back! And to think I never suspected. But do you love him enough to marry him, even though he is blind?

Franque. Yes. I only know I love him—nothing else matters.

Anna. I, too, have been harboring a secret. John is here in New York.

Franque. He is here!—Have you seen him! —Where is he?

Anna. At the Red Cross hospital.

Franque. At the Red Cross hospital!

Anna. Yes, the car is out in front now waiting to take you there.

Franque. I will go at once. (*Franque rushes around hunting her bag, very excited.*)

Anna (*Taking the ring from her finger*). Take this ring to Captain Willacy and tell him the diamond is not large enough.

Franque (*Who has thrown a light cape around her, which was on the clothes tree, absently takes the ring and hurries toward the door at the right. She stops suddenly and looks back at Anna who is standing by the window.*) You have worn it a long time.

Anna (*Coming gaily to her*). Yes, it is a relief to be rid of it. Goodby. (*Kissing Franque*) You may give this, to Captain Willacy for me, just for old time's sake.

Franque. I will, if I don't forget. For you see, I intend giving him several of my own. Goodby. (*Exit*)

(*Anna stands watching her go down the hall as the front door is heard closing. She removes the mask of gaiety from her face and goes wearily to the telephone and in a changed voice calls.*)

Anna. Main 3260—Yes, please. Is this the Metropolitan Club? - - - Call Mr. Van Loan to the phone, please - - - (*With forced gaiety*).

Anna. This is Anna - - - So you had almost given me up - - - I love to keep people in suspense. - - - I must tell you the joke I played on Franque. - - - Yes - - - I sent her to see Captain Willacy and I made her believe he is blind. - - - Oh! No! The specialist told me himself it is only a matter of time. - - - You are not interested in hearing about other people. - - - You may have your answer today as I promised. - - - If my answer is **yes** you will be here with the car in two minutes. - - - You don't intend giving me time to change my mind? You may come for me under one condition. The million you give me must be turned over to the Red Cross. - - - Yes, all of it, to be used somewhere in France. - - - No I don't wish it given in my name, just from an American Girl. - - - Yes, Yes, I will be ready even to the bridal veil. (*She hangs up the receiver and goes to her bag from which she takes a Red Cross head veil and places it upon her head. Then she crosses to the table and picks up the picture of Captain Willacy. After looking at it long and earnestly, she drops into the chair beside the table and sobs bitterly. Just then the impatient honk of the automobile is heard. With great effort, she stands—Then saluting the picture she passes out very erect while*

the strains of "The Stars and Stripes Forever" can be faintly heard.)

DIAMOND SEVEN, HEARTS EIGHT

Time, present.

Place, Reception Room of Mrs. Stafford's home.

Time of presentation, twenty-five minutes.

CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

Marie.—A French Maid.
Mrs. Loretta Stafford.—Mother of Tom.
Mrs. Ellen VanVoorees.—Mother of Grace.
Grace VanVoorees.
Nathalia Phillips.—Secretary of Mrs. Stafford's.
Natilla.—Cook of Mrs. Stafford's.

(NOTE: *In this sketch, every character has the opportunity of looking beautiful. Mrs. Stafford and Mrs. VanVoorees must not be dressed to look old. Even Natilla, the cook, must look pretty and cute.*)

SCENE: *Home of Mrs. Stafford. Wraps every place. Marie busying herself about the room. She goes to the inner door and cautiously opens it. A babble of women's voices is heard, indicating an auction party. She closes the door quickly and then puts on one of the beautiful wraps, saying*:

Marie. I look to see if no one is in sight, so

I can look out of sight. (*Admiring herself in the mirror.*) If Francois could only see me now; he would say, ma chere is ze exquisite Mademoiselle! Why was I born poor. I might have been ze lady, instead of ze maid. If the old stork wings had not grown fatigue and he had carried me farther up ze avenue. (*She removes her coat and runs to the door, comes back and picks up a photograph of a handsome young man*).

Ven I come here first, I make ze eyes at you —for why—because you is ze rich Monsieur of ze house.....But ze eyes I make zhay all go in ze waste basket. Oh!—If you had only love me, zhen I would not have cared where ze old bird has dropped me.

(*Mrs. Stafford comes to the inner door. Marie dusts the picture and puts it back.*)

Marie. Ze picture of Madam's son catches ze dust so terrible.

Mrs. Stafford. When Mrs. VanVoorees and her daughter arrive, call me.

Marie. You mean ze grand lady who walks like zis, with ze daughter zat look like ze flowers —vat you call him—ze—wild—rose.

Mrs. Stafford. Marie, you never miss an opportunity to display your English.

Marie. Oui, Oui, Madame. But I thought all ze guests had come.

Mrs. Stafford. All who are going to play cards have come. By the way I have invited Miss Phillips, but she will not be here until late.

Marie. Not ze lady, zat writes ze letter for Madame.

Mrs. Stafford. Yes, my secretary. Don't

stand there and stare. (*She goes to the outer door.*)

Marie. Well what do you know, Miss Phillips a guest. I think I go for ze vacation too and maybe Madame will invite me to her swell partee.

Mrs. Stafford. Here they are now. When you have assisted them you may go.

Marie. Oui, Oui, Madame.

(*Mrs. VanVoorees and Grace entering.*)

Mrs. Stafford. I could shake you for being late.

Mrs. Van. My dear Loretta did you ever know me to be on time?

Grace (*Kissing Mrs. Stafford*). I told Mother to hurry but she replied that *haste* was a word necessary to messenger boys only and not included in her vocabulary.

Mrs. Stafford. If St. Peter asks me in regard to your future punishment, I will advise him to make you live an alarm clock life.

Grace. Imagine Mother. Oh! (*Laughing*) If I can only see her, Hell will be Heaven.

Mrs. Van. When I start my reform for the poor working girls, it will be to abolish that gruesome machine that checks their time. (*They have removed their wraps and Marie places them on a chair and leaves.*)

Mrs. Stafford (*To Grace.*) You go in, Dearie, you know all the ladies.

Grace. Yes I know them all right, that's the reason I hesitate. Is Mrs. Wagnalls there? You know when I am near that woman I have a feeling that I want to wind her up, she talks

like a phonograph about to run down.

Mrs. Van. She reminds me of a Nullo hand—Looks like nothing but counts.

Grace. And I suppose **Miss** Andrews, the matrimonial remnant of forty bargain seasons is in her accustomed place.

Mrs. Stafford. Oh! yes I invited her to chaperon the married **girls.**

Mrs. Van. I pity the man that gets her, or rather that she gets, for her affections have been in cold storage too long.

Grace. Oh! Mother you must keep yours in the same refrigerator.

Mrs Stafford. Run along I have something important to tell your mother.

Grace (*Laughing*). You two girls always have some secret that can't wait.

(*Exit*)

Mrs. Stafford (*Taking a letter from her pocket*). Here's a letter I just received from Tom.—Oh! I am so upset, I can't believe—

Mrs. Van. Believe—Believe what? He isn't married is he? (*Taking the letter and starting to read it.*)

Mrs. Stafford. That's just it—he—

Mrs. Van. He thinks he is going to be. Really Loretta you actually frightened me for a moment.

Mrs. Stafford. Oh! But you don't know Tom.

Mrs. Van. Who is this girl Nathalia, some adventuress?

Mrs. Stafford. Don't say that,—she's Miss Phillips, my secretary.

Mrs. Van. Oh! so that's what the minx was up to.

Mrs. Stafford. Ellen, you are too severe on the girl.

Mrs. Van. I am surprised you can defend her. Perhaps I have been misled, and it was my dream alone, that our children marry.

Mrs. Stafford. You know better than that. I am as disappointed as you, but there is nothing to do, but make the best of the matter. Tom knows my wishes and you see by his letter that he has tried to comply with them.

(*Reads letter.*)

"Mumsy dear, I have tried to love Grace in the way you wish, but I can only think of her as a jolly comrade. Perhaps, if Nathalia had not come into my life, I would have gone on with this marriage, but now that I know, what God intended love to be, in justice to Grace I could not. Don't think, that I have not tried to conquer this love, for I know it will be a blow to your pride, but Mumsy dear, she's so wonderful and I love her beyond———

Mrs. Van. Spare me from the raving of a mad man.

Mrs. Stafford. But Ellen you must listen to this. "Now I suppose you will think Nathalia has encouraged me, but she has not. Mumsy, she loves you very much and knowing your heart is set upon my marriage with Grace will not accept me. She sent me away for a month and made me promise not to see her or write, and then at the end of that time, if I still love her, she might reconsider———."

Mrs. Van. Um, she's a sly designing creature. Why didn't you tell me of this before.

Mrs. Stafford. This is the first I've known of it. Of course I could see that Tom was fond of her, but I thought nothing of that, for she is a very lovable girl and I have become very much attached to her myself.

Mrs. Van. She has you all hypnotised. You surely will not consent to your son marrying a girl so far beneath him.

Mrs. Stafford. Ellen, you forget that you are speaking of my future daughter-in-law. Nathalia is my son's choice and I shall not object. Call it foolishness or sentiment, I care not. I gave up my lover and married the man whom my parents chose, and you know what a failure my life has been.

Mrs. Van. Well I married for **love** and my life is no different from yours. Men are all alike, none of them are true, only some of them have been found out, that's all.

Mrs. Stafford. I wonder why it is, that wives who have been deceived console themselves with the thought that all men are faithless.

Mrs. Van. I suppose because it is true.

Mrs. Stafford. No I do not believe that; because your husband and mine are false, is no reason we should include the husband of our friend. If we do, we stoop to use a coward's weapon to protect ourselves.

(*Enter Nathalia.*)

Nathalia (*Laughing*). I thought this was to an auction party, not a suffragette meeting.

Mrs. Stafford (*Kissing her*). Oh! I am so glad you came. Ellen, you remember Nathalia. (*Nathalia goes lo Mrs. Van and offers her hand, but she puts up her lorgnette and gives a stony stare.*)

Mrs. Van. Oh, yes,—the girl who has been in your employ the last year. You have been away for a month, I had almost forgotten you. Lorretta, I am going in and see who is likely to get high score. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. Stafford. Don't mind her dear, she's evidently eaten an indigestible lunch.

Nathalia. I am sorry your best friend doesn't like me.

Mrs. Stafford. It's not your fault so don't worry about it. Its good to see you again, I didn't realize how much I depended upon you. Tom will return tonight, and with you both here, the house will again seem like home. Come in, as soon as you can. I want you to meet the ladies. (*Exit.*)

Nathalia (*Picks up Tom's picture*). I wonder if you too have forgotten. I will soon know. What were your parting words? "I shall come to claim you at the end of the month, at the end of the thirty days that will seem like thirty years. And that you may know that my heart is still yours, I will send the flowers you love best." Ah!—Tom, dear if you only knew how great is my love for you. You said, "that I was cold and did not care for you and though it would take years you would make me love you." Dear silly boy, you little knew the struggle I had to send you away. But the

thought that you might some day regret, kept me brave. Now if the violets are in my room, I shall know he is coming for me, and if not, then, then—well then nothing matters. I shall be like a miner who toils patiently, endlessly on, by the tiny light of his candle, knowing that the sun does shine but never feeling its warmth. (*Laughing*) How sentimental I am growing, I dare say that little God Cupid is laughing up his sleeve. Oh! I forgot he doesn't wear sleeves.

(*Enter Grace imitating a Shakespearean tragedian.*)

Grace. To flirt or not to flirt, that is the question, whether tis wiser in the heart to enjoy the side long glances of some courageous youth, and be taken in his arms, and hear fairy tales bubble. To raise the eyes—to smile—and with a smile begin the heart throb and the thousand electrical shocks that flesh is heir to. Tis a flirtation devoutly to be wished.

To smile—to embrace—to embrace perchance to kiss. Aye that's the stuff: For in that kiss what germs may come, will give us —The Flu. (*Laughing*) You look serious enough to be giving it in the original form.

Nathalia. I think I feel more like playing Juliet.

Grace. Then behold Cousin Spirits, for I am in love too.

Nathalia. Grace dear, do you love Tom—so—so—so that your heart will be broken if—if——

Grace. Stop right there! Mother has de-

cided that I marry Tom, and take my word she will see that there are no if's.

Nathalia. But are you quite sure?

Grace. Here's my engagement ring. You know Tom's coming back to-night and we have planned to be married at once. (*Hugging Nathalia*) I am so happy I love every one. Why! you don't seem glad.

Nathalia. Why, yes, of course I am surprised, that's all. Grace dear, you will excuse me while I go to my room. I have a headache. (*Exit.*)

Grace. I ought to be ashamed of myself to tease her so. Its true, that Tom and I have planned to be married, but **not** to each other. Wouldn't Mother be furious if she knew. I wish Tom would consent to a double elopement. Wouldn't it be exciting? I can imagine Mother reading the message. Tom and Nathalia married. P. S. Also Grace and Jim. Anyway she will receive the Post Script. (*Exit*).

(*Enters Natilla carrying a bunch of violets and a note.*)

Natilla. To tank dat Tom he luves me all dere time, and ay never knows it vunces. Mine brudder vich bane dere messenger boy, just came wid dis and says dot a jentlemen tolt him to pling deem to me. Mine brudder he sayd he didn't spells Natilla like ve did, but dat bane all right—Yah!

Vot does hees letter reads?

Dear Heart—Ah, he tanks ay bane dere hearts of deredeer—vell ay alveys knew he likes dene venisons, but I didn't hope he likes me

dat much, aint it yet.

(*Reads Sweedish accent.*)

"Ay have been avay trying to forget you but its no use. Dear love it were easier to try to live without breathing than to live without you, for to me you are the breath of life." Vot does he means by dot? First ay bane somding vot he eats an now ay bane dere air he breathes, aint ay. Vell ay yust teels him vot he vouls shoke if he trys to swallor me. "Here are the flowers I know you love best." (*She looks at the flowers.*) Oh! budt ay didn't ay likes the carrynation pest, but dot bane all right for him to make dere guess, anyvey aint it. An he says he bane going to be here soon to claim me. Py gracious, ay must go tell Ollie dat ay busts dere begagement wid him. Ay loove Ollie budt he bane only dere bolicemans. Ay bane tanking ay bane lucky to get him ven all dere mens gettin' dead in dere vars. An now ay bane goint to marry a pillionaire mans, aint ay? (*She looks at the wraps.*) Ay be wearing somtan sweller dan dees pretty quick, Oh, some vun bane coming. Ay vill hide my selves already yet. (*She hides.*)

(*Enters Mrs. Van—and looks around.*)

Mrs. Van. I wont allow this marriage to go on. Tom must marry Grace, everyone expects it and I wont have my daughter humiliated by this common working girl. (*She puts her rings in Nathalia's wrap.*)

Mrs. Van. This is a terrible thing to do, but something has to be done, before Tom returns tonight. Oh! I'll see that the girl is well taken

care of. I know they would never arrest her. (*She exits.*)

(*Natilla comes out.*)

Natilla. Vot does she means. Ay don't understood. Maype ay guess ay bane cutting out her Grace—aint ay. (*Natilla goes to wrap and takes out the rings saying*) Dimuts! Pretty soon Tom bane goin' to buy me a soltude. (*She puts rings into the wrap.*)(*Enters Marie.*)

Marie. How dare you ze cook come up here?

Natilla. Maype ay don't alveys bane der cooks.

Marie. No! maype you be ze grand scrub lady.

Natilla. No, ay don't tank ay bane.

Marie. Why are you not in the kitchen.

Natilla. Dere is nuttins to do.—Dere lunches es being served by dere cateress. (*Music is heard from the other room*). Oh, that bane the music! Marie ay tanks you bane pretty and you skipps er bout an you never vunce stumbles already. Now if you vill teach me yust vun liddle dances, ay vill sneak you oudt vun pottle of vine.

Marie. Oh vill you?

Natilla. Yah, an yust you wait, you bane tickled dot you bane friendly wid me.

Marie. I will show you not for ze friendship, but for ze vine. (*Marie hums and dances very prettily. Natilla awkwardly tries to imitate her.*)

Marie. It is so easy.

Natilla. Yah, aint it?

(*Marie ends the dance with a low courtesy.*

Natilla, in trying to imitate her, sits flat on floor.)

Natilla. Py gracious, ay most forgot, ay must go an tell Ollie.

Marie. Oh, is he your beau?

Natilla. He bane vunce and now ay go to phreak hees heart.

Marie. Perhaps Ollie he vill be glad. (*Laughs*)

Natilla. Ay tanks you bane a silly fool.

Marie (*Shrugs her shoulders*). And I tink you vas a polite lady, but possible is it we both mistaken.

Natilla. Ay accepts dere apologies, come on get dere vine.

(*They exit.*)

(*Nathalia enters looking very sad.*)

Nathalia. The violets were not there—Grace was right—Oh! I must get away before Tom returns. (*She hurriedly puts on her wraps.*) I must leave some word for Mrs. Stafford. (*She takes card from her bag.*) What shall I say? (*Writes*) "Dear Mrs. Stafford: Please forgive me for leaving you in this strange way but I can not explain. Don't try to find me for I never expect to see you again—Nathalia." (*She places the card on the dresser, seeing Tom's picture, she picks it up.*) Oh, Tom—Tom! (*She almost breaks down, then recovers herself and clasping the picture under her coat she starts to leave. Mrs. Van and Mrs. Stafford and Grace enter. Mrs. Van runs to the dresser saying:*)

Mrs. Van. I left them right here.

Grace. Mother don't get so excited.

(*Mrs. Van sees Nathalia and rushes to the door saying....*)

Mrs. Van. No one leaves this house until my diamonds are found.

Mrs. Stafford (*Finding Nathalia's card*). Nathalia, what is the meaning of this.

Nathalia. Do forgive me, but I must leave, I am sorry that I can not explain.

Mrs. Van. Young woman, do you realize that my rings have been stolen!

Grace. Mother, don't say that.

Mrs. Van. Your actions are very suspicious. I hope you will not object to being searched.

Nathalia (*Keeping the picture close to her*). Oh! No—No—No—do believe me Mrs. VanVoorees,-I know nothing about your jewels.

Mrs. Van. Unless you consent I shall call a detective.

Mrs. Stafford. Nathalia dear, I know you are innocent, but for my sake allow Mrs. VanVoorees that satisfaction.

(*Nathalia allows Mrs. Van to examine her coat, the picture slips to the floor. Grace picks it up unnoticed by the others. Mrs. Van holds up her rings triumphantly. Nathalia is dazed. Mrs. Stafford drops into a chair.*)

Mrs. Stafford. Nathalia, why did you do it? Oh, my poor boy! my poor boy! (*Nathalia runs to Mrs. Stafford and drops on her knees.*)

Nathalia. Oh, Mrs. Stafford don't think me guilty, as God is my witness I am innocent.

Mrs. Van. Really your bravado is amusing. No doubt, you will tell me my rings have developed a motor power, by which they walked

into your pockets.

Nathalia (*Rising*). Mrs. VanVoorees for some reason unknown to me, you do not like me.

Mrs. Van. You over estimate yourself. I neither like or dislike you, for I have never even noticed you. But to prove that I bear you no malice, I will let you go without punishment. Although stealing has become so common among servants that I ought to make an example of you. Go now and never return, for as surely as you do I will prosecute you.

Nathalia. Go! You tell me to go, with this awful accusation against me. No! I shall never leave until my good name is cleared.

(*Enter Natilla with a black eye, singing "Ollie Oh Ollie, I love but you."*)

Mrs. Stafford (*Sharply*). Natilla.

Natilla. Ox-cuse me.

Nathalia (*Seeing the violets*). Oh, these are mine, mine—where did you get them?

Natilla. Ay, vy, Tom, he sends dem to me.

Nathalia (*Reading*). To Miss Nathalia.

Natilla. Vell my name bane Natilla, he yust spells it a liddle different dat bane all. You see! ay ven to tell Ollie, he bane mine feller, dat ay couldn't marry wid him, an Ollie he looves me so, he yust knocks me down wid his fist, and makes me go right away to dere justice of dere pieces an ve bane murdered.

Grace. You mean married.

Natilla. Vell vat bane dere difference. (*Takes handkerchief with money tied in it and gives it to Mrs. Stafford.*)

Mrs. Stafford. What is this?

Natilla. It bane all mine moneys. Yust keep it until ay come back. Ve bane goin' to take a liddle honeymoons trip an ay didn't vants to go wid a strange man wid all dat money on me. Ay vill bane back outside a veek. (*To Mrs. Van.*) And now Tom can marry your Gracie. Ay heard you say so.

Mrs. Van. You heard me—

Natilla. Yah! Ay bane hiding behind dere scream and you bane er talking and putting dere rings inside your coats. (*Exits.*)

Grace. Mother what does she mean about your rings?

Mrs. Van (*Breaking down*). Oh, my God! I might have known I would be found out. Oh, my child don't look at me like that. What I did was for your sake.

Grace. Oh, Mother how could you? I can never—never forgive you.

Nathalia. Surely Grace if I can forgive her, you must. What your mother did was through her great love for you. Neither you, nor I, nor does the world understand the boundlessness of a mother's love. (*Nathalia leads Grace to her mother, who is standing with bowed head at the back of the room. Mrs. Van opens her arms and Grace rushes into them.*)

(*Enters Marie.*)

Marie. I beg ze pardon, Madame. Monsieur Tom is in ze library and wishes to speak with Madamselle Nathalia.

(*Mrs. Stafford puts her arm around Nathalia and starts to lead her from the room.*)

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